



**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
Assistant Secretary

1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

OCT 24 2008

The Honorable John Shimkus
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Shimkus:

Thank you for your letter of October 14, supporting a request by American Airlines, British Airways, Iberia Airlines, Finnair, and Royal Jordanian for a grant of antitrust immunity to operate an integrated alliance. The Secretary has asked that I respond on her behalf.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's review of this request is part of a public proceeding in which interested parties have the opportunity to comment. The Department carefully considers all requests for antitrust immunity, beginning with a review of the record to assess whether there is sufficient information to make a reasoned decision that satisfies all statutory requirements. Decisions regarding requests for antitrust immunity are made after consultation with the Department of Justice, and are based upon statutory standards that include antitrust principles. As this proceeding is pending, I am sure you understand that I cannot comment on the merits of the case. I assure you, however, that the Department will give full and fair consideration to the Joint Applicants' request, as well as all comments in the docket.

As is our normal practice, I am placing a copy of your letter and this response in Docket OST-2008-0252 as a contact outside the record in this matter. I appreciate your interest in this proceeding.

Sincerely yours,

Michael W. Reynolds
Acting Assistant Secretary for
Aviation and International Affairs

JOHN M. SHIMKUS
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THE INTERNET

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1319

October 14, 2008

The Honorable Mary Peters
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Docket DOT-OST-2008-0252

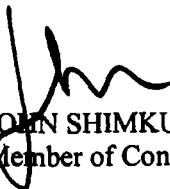
Dear Secretary Peters,

I am writing in support of the application for antitrust immunity filed by American Airlines, British Airways, Iberia, Finnair and Royal Jordanian. Approval of this application would enable these airlines to cooperatively deliver more competitive flight schedules, fares and service. And it would allow them to compete on equal footing with other airline alliances that currently enjoy broad antitrust immunity for transatlantic flights.

Additionally, I write in support of the request by American Airlines, British Airways and Iberia to establish a joint business agreement for operations between North America and Europe, which would create a more efficient and comprehensive transatlantic network for the carriers' customers. This will offer consumers better service, scheduling and pricing options as well as help to ensure that customers continue to benefit from the availability of three competitive air alliances.

If you have any questions, or require additional information, please contact Ryan Tracy on my staff at 202-225-5271.

Sincerely,


JOHN SHIMKUS
Member of Congress

S10-081022-005

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